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nation, (2) the parallelism of each verse, (3) the meaning of each individual verse, (4) the logical connection existing between the several verses, (5) the theme and analysis of the Psalm, (6) the superscription in its relation to the contents, (7) the contents in view of the Davidic authorship, (8) the important teachings of the Psalm.

4. Read Pss. 51 and 32 in connection with the story of David's sin (2 Sam. 11; 12), and make notes under the following heads :
 - 1) The circumstances under which these Psalms were written : (a) Ps. 51, immediately upon his coming to realize the enormity of his sin ; (b) Ps. 32, "a review of his experience somewhat later, in which he dwells upon the blessedness of forgiveness obtained, and describes the misery he had suffered while his sin was still unconfessed and unrepented."
 - 2) The expressions contained in each which relate (a) to the character of the sin ; (b) to his appreciation of his sinfulness ; (c) to his desire to be forgiven ; (d) to God's attitude towards sinners.
 - 3) The support given by the contents of these Psalms to the statement of the superscriptions that they are Davidic.
 - 4) The apparent impossibility that vs. 18, 19 of Psalm 51 could have been written by David.
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TWELFTH STUDY.—THE PSALMS OF DAVID—THIRD PERIOD.

[The material of this "study" is furnished by Professor Harper.]

I. PRELIMINARY NOTES.

1. Is there not danger, after all, that we shall expend all our energy in seeking for traces of historical connection between a given Psalm and the events which perhaps furnished the occasion of its origin, and forget what is of greater importance, the great teachings which the Psalm was intended to convey at the time of its writing, and during all time?
2. The work of the Bible-student is two-fold:—(1) *To transfer himself* to the times and circumstances in which a given passage was first written; *to study the passage* in the light of these times and circumstances, and *discover*, from this study, the underlying *principles* which it illustrates and teaches. (2) *To apply these principles* to himself, his own times, his own circumstances. We may, for convenience, term the first part of the work *study*, the second, *application*.
3. We may divide all Bible-students into three classes:—(1) Those who study, but do not apply; (2) Those who apply, but do not study; (3) Those who study and apply.
4. There are many good men who become so engrossed in the first part of the work, the critical study, that they lose sight of the end for which they took it up. This class is a select one, including many of the world's greatest scholars.
5. A large number of Bible-students spend all their time in applying—*what?* Their own ideas and conceits, their own fancies and errors; for they have not *studied*. They have actually forgotten that, in the work of application, one must have *something* to apply. Could any thing be more absurd? It is this mistake that is proving fatal in the case of a considerable proportion of Sunday-school Bible-work, namely, too much application, too little material to apply.
6. The *ideal* Bible-student is one who both studies and applies. This class needs to be increased. Who that is not now a member will join it?

II. LITERARY TOPICS.

1. **The Messianic Idea in the Psalms.*** (1) Note in Psalms 2; 20; 21; 45; 72; 110, the various representations of the Messiah as *King*. (2) Note in Pss. 22;

* Consult various commentaries, especially Perowne, on the individual Psalms; introduction to Perowne's commentary, pp. 41-54; Briggs' "Messianic Prophecy," pp. 60-63.

69, the expressions which refer to the Messiah as a *prophet and sufferer*. (3) Note in Ps. 110 the representation of the Messiah as a *priest*. (4) In what sense may these Psalms have been true of David or the original speaker, and yet, at the same time, true of the Messiah? (5) Granting that Ps. 40:7-9 (Heb. 10:5-7) is Messianic, is it possible for vs. 10-12 of the same Psalm to be so interpreted? Why not? Inference to be drawn from this? (6) In the same way, (a) Ps. 41:9, according to John 13:18, refers to the Messiah; but (b) is the first half of this verse quoted by Christ? and (c) would v. 10 be possible in the Messiah's mouth? (7) On the ground of these passages formulate two or three principles in accordance with which the Messianic application of the various Psalms seems to be regulated.*

2. **Expressions referring to Uprightness, Perfection.** (1) Examine Ps. 7:3-5; 17:3; 18:20-22; 19:13, etc., and note expressions which seem to exhibit a self-righteous spirit. (2) Compare, on the other hand, such expressions of an opposite character as are found in Ps. 51. (3) Explain the sense in which the first class of passages is to be taken.†
3. **The Imprecatory Element in the Psalms.‡** (1) Read Ps. 35; 58; 59; 69; 109, and note expressions which seem to have the force of *curses*, and to be uttered in a vindictive spirit. (2) Examine also Ps. 3:2,7; 9:2-4; 18:37-43; 37:12-15; 52:5-7; 63:9-11; 137:7-9. (3) Weigh each of the following considerations, and decide whether individually or collectively they assist in a better comprehension of these passages:§ (a) The verbs should be translated as futures, and not as imperatives or optatives, e.g., Ps. 109:9, *His children shall be fatherless*, etc., instead of *Let his children be fatherless*, etc.; but is this grammatically possible? (b) The Old Testament did not teach the duty of loving and forgiving enemies; a different standard existed; but see Exod. 23:4,5; Prov. 24:17,18; 25:21,22; Ps. 7:4, and story of Joseph in Genesis. (c) These denunciations are personal, and are to be judged as we judge David's great sin; what objection to this view? (d) After all, this element is very slight, and to be explained as due to the *vehement of oriental expression*. (e) These expressions are not personal; David's enemies were God's enemies; it is because of the insults which God has received that he utters them; David's feelings against his own enemies are described in Ps. 35:12,13. (f) They are an expression of outraged justice, forbearance having ceased to be a virtue; they express that feeling common to all ages, that the wicked deserve punishment. Do not many Christians of to-day *pray* that the convicted murderer may not escape hanging? (g) They are intended for dark days, days when the wicked are in power, when resentment becomes "the holiest of instincts."
4. **Attitude of the Psalmist Towards the Law.¶** (1) Read Pss. 1:2; 19:7-11; 40:8; 89:30-32; 94:12; 119:1-8, 72, 77, 97, 165, etc., and note the general feeling entertained by the Psalmists for the law. (2) Compare (a) the words "*I will order unto thee*," Ps. 5:3 with Gen. 22:9; Lev. 1:7,8; (b) "*will whet his sword*," Ps. 7:12 with Deut. 32:41,42; (c) Psalm 8, its thought and order with Gen. 1:26,27; (d) Psalm 17:8 with Deut. 32:10,11; (e) Ps. 18:2 with Deut. 32:4,37; and note the verbal correspondences. (3) Compare (a) Ps. 3:3 with Gen. 15:1; (b) Ps. 4:3 with Exod. 11:7 seq., (c) 4:6 with Num. 6:26,27; (d) Ps. 9:12 with Gen. 9:5; (e) Ps. 11:6 with Gen. 19:24,25; (f) Ps. 18:16 with Exod. 2:10; (g) Ps. 50:5 with Exod. 24:5-8; (h) Ps. 66:11,12 with Exod. 14:22; and note the references to historical events narrated in the Pentateuch and the seemingly fortuitous character of the references. (4) Compare (a) Ps. 4:6 with Deut. 33:19; (b) Ps. 10:14,18 with Deut. 10:18; (c) Ps. 15:4,5 with Exod. 22:25; 23:8; (d) Ps. 26:6 with Exod. 19:6; 30:20; (e) Ps. 27:6 with Num. 10:10; (f) Ps. 54:6 with Num. 15:3; (g) Ps. 56:13 seq. with Num. 15:1-16, and note the references to *legal portions* of the Pentateuch; (5) study Ps. 16 and compare (a) v. 4 with Exod. 23:13; (b) v. 5 with Num. 18:20; Deut. 10:9; 18:1,2; (c) v. 6 with Josh. 17:5; (d) v. 9 ("glory") with Gen. 49:6. (6) Study Ps. 51:16,17; 50:7-16 and determine their meaning in view of the Levitical ordinances; (7) Formulate a

* See Gardiner's "Old and New Testaments in their Mutual Relations." Lects. viii.-xii. New York: James Pott & Co.

† See Perowne's Commentary on the Psalms, pp. 59, 61, and other commentaries *in loc.*

‡ See introduction to various commentaries.

§ Taken from Smith's "Bible Dictionary," *Imprecatory Psalms*.

¶ See Bissell's "The Pentateuch; Its Origin and Structure;" Ch. x. Perowne's Commentary on the Psalms, introduction, pp. 55-58.

statement covering the conclusions reached in this study, as to (a) the priority of the Pentateuch; (b) verbal, historical and legal correspondences between the Psalms and the Pentateuch; (c) the spiritual life manifested in the Psalms as an outgrowth and result of the Pentateuchal laws.

III. THE BIBLICAL LESSON.

1. Read carefully the Psalms connected with Absalom's rebellion, in the following order : (a) 63, written in the wilderness during the flight before the passage of the Jordan ; (b) 3 ; 4, morning and evening hymns, after passing the Jordan ; (c) 26 ; 62, which perhaps refer to the traitors who deserted him ; (d) 23 ; compare v. 5 with 2 Sam. 17:27-29 ; (e) 27 ; 28, during his exile at Mahanaim ; (f) 69 ; 109 (doubtful), which have been thought to refer to Ahithophel's treachery ;—making notes under the following heads :
 - 1) Expressions which indicate an eager desire for the privileges of the sanctuary.
 - 2) Trust in God, that he will continue to help.
 - 3) Assurance that in the end he will be delivered.
 - 4) Internal evidence in favor of the Davidic authorship of any or all of these Psalms.
2. Take up exhaustively Psalm 23, and treat as follows :
 - 1) Read the Psalm and mark every expression which seems to need explanation, and with such helps as are within reach determine its force ; e. g., (v. 1) "*my shepherd*," "*I shall not want*," (v. 2) "*still waters*," better "*waters of refreshment*," (v. 3) "*restorest my soul*" (cf. 19:7), "*paths of righteousness*," "*for his name's sake*;" (v. 4) "*valley of the shadow of death*," better "*valley of deep darkness*," "*thy rod and thy staff*;" (v. 5) "*preparest a table*" (2 Sam. 17:17-29), "*in presence of mine enemies*," "*anointed my head with oil*," "*cup runneth over*;" (v. 6) "*goodness and mercy*," "*will dwell in the house of the Lord*," better "*I shall return to dwell*," etc.; "*forever*."
 - 2) Read vs. 1-4, and make an effort to interpret the language in strict accord with the figure ; determine whether there is a single expression which cannot be taken literally as if uttered by a sheep, (e. g., (a) "*thou restorest my soul*" = "*thou dost revive, quicken me*," the words *my soul* being often used in the sense of *my life*, or even *myself, me*; (b) "*paths of righteousness*," etymologically *paths of straightness* (paths that are not crooked and difficult); (c) "*for his name's sake*" = "*for the sake of the shepherd's reputation*;" (d) "*valley of deep darkness*" = the dark ravines through which a Palestinian shepherd must often lead his flock), and note the influence of David's early shepherd life upon the diction.
 - 3) Read vs. 5, 6, studying closely the second figure employed, that of a *host*, and compare with the narrative in 2 Sam. 17:27-29.
 - 4) Study the parallelism and strophic organization of the Psalm according to the following translation and division :*

“Jehovah is | my shepherd | I cannot want.
In pastures | of green grass | He causeth me to lie down ;
Unto waters | of refreshment | He leadeth me ;
Myself | he restorest | —

“He guideth me | in paths | of righteousness | for His name's sake ;
Also | when I walk | in the valley | of dense darkness,
I fear not | evil, | for thou art | with me,
Thy rod | and Thy staff | they | comfort me.

* By Prof. C. R. Briggs, in “Biblical Study,” pp. 282, 283. It is given here because the old translation has become so familiar to all readers as to have lost its force in many particulars.

"He prepareth | before me | a table | in the presence | of my adversaries ;
 Has he anointed | with oil | my head, | my cup | is abundance ;
 Surely goodness | and mercy | pursue me | all the days | of my life,
 And I shall return | to dwell in the house | of Jehovah | for length | of days."

[This presentation is three-fold : (1) three strophes each of four lines ; (2) the parallelism of the members ; (3) the measurement, viz.: *first* strophe, three measures or tones ; *second*, four measures ; *third*, five measures.]

- 4) (a) Note the differences between Professor Briggs' translation and that of the R. V.; (b) determine the meaning and particular force of each line, as above presented ; (c) determine the logical connection between each line and that which precedes and follows it ; (d) determine the general force of each of the three strophes and the relation which they sustain to each other.
- 5) Discover the theme of the Psalm and make an analysis upon the basis of this theme.
- 6) Consider the three views which are maintained as to the time in David's life at which this Psalm was composed ; viz.: (1) when he was a youth shepherding his father's flocks ; (2) when he was fleeing from Absalom ; (3) when old and ready to die, he looks back upon his life fraught with so many dangers ;—and produce reasons for and against each.
- 7) Note carefully the teachings of the Psalm under the following heads : (1) God's care manifested towards those who are in his keeping ; (2) The situation of men as a result of this care.
3. Upon this or a similar model take up and work out other Psalms of this period, e. g., 3; 4; 27 or 69.